

22.

A
SERMON
AGAINST
Swearing & Cursing.

Preached upon *Trinity-Sunday,*

A T
St. Aldate's Church in Oxford, 1699.

By *DAVID JONES* Master of Arts
and Student of *Christ-Church, Oxon.*

L O N D O N,
Printed for *Tbo. Parkhurst* at the *Bible and Three Crowns*
in *Cheap-side* MDCXCIX.

A
SERMON

A GAINST
Swearing & Drunkenness

Preached upon Trinity Sunday

At St. Albans Church in Oxford, 1693



By DAVID JONES, Minister of the
and Student of Christ Church, Oxon.

LONDON:
Printed for J. B. Roper, at the Bible and Prayers
in Great Britain, 1700.

JEREM. XXIII. 10.

Because of Swearing the Land mourneth.

IN the Verse that is immediately before the Text, the Prophet makes this Complaint, *Mine heart within me is broken, and all my bones shake: I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome.* That is, I stagger, I reel to and fro, as if I were drunk; I am amazed, I am at my wits end; I cannot tell what to do, my heart is broken, my bones quake, and I tremble all over. Doubtless, you all grant this to be a very miserable Condition, at the first hearing of it. And you cannot chuse but ask, What the matter is, and what ails him, that he makes such a pitiful Monie, and takes on at such an extraordinary rate? Surely, he has buried some dear Friend or near Relation, He has had some great Loss by Sea or Land, or He is rack'd and tortur'd with some Violent Fit of the Gout or Stone. No verily, Nothing of all this troubles Him: no, nor any thing like it. But,

The first thing that troubles Him, is set down in that same Verse that is immediately before the Text; for says He there: *My heart within me is broken, and all my bones shake, because of the Prophets.* But was not He a Prophet himself? And what harm could the Prophets

do Him? Did they Preach any terrible Sermon of Hell and Damnation, that made Him besides himself, and scared and frightened Him out of His Senses? No verily. But they did directly the quite contrary. They Preached Smooth things, and they Flattered their Hearers in their evil ways. *They said unto them that despised the Lord, ye shall have Peace: and they said unto every one that walked after the Imagination and Stubborness of his own heart, No harm shall come upon you: Verse 17. They Prophefied false dreams, and they caused the people of the Lord to erre by their Lies, and by their Lightness; by their loose and lewd Carriage: Ver. 32. And this is the First thing that struck the good man to the heart and soul. And*

The Second also is set down in that same Verse, that is immediately before the Text. For, says He there, I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the Lord, and because of the words of his Holiness. For, Thus saith the Lord of Hosts concerning the Prophets, Behold, I will feed them with wormwood, and make them drink the water of Gall: Ver. 15. Behold, a whirlwind is gone forth in Fury, even a grievous whirlwind; it shall fall grievously upon the head of the wicked: ver. 19. The Anger of the Lord shall not Return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart: ver. 20. And He was amazed and astonished, and, in a manner, out of his wits, as a Drunken man is, because the Lord denounced so many Threatnings, and Woes, and Curses against those false Prophets, and they made no more account of Them, and of the words of his Holiness, than if they had been the words of a Drunken man, that never minds what he says, but always speaks what comes uppermost. As Noah was laugh'd and hooted at, for pretending to foretell the Universal Deluge, and for Building himself

an Ark to escape Drowning : As *Lot* was laugh'd and hooted at, for pretending to foretell the Destruction of *Sodom*, and for going out of it to escape Burning : And as *Christ* himself was represented for a *Wine-bibber*, and his *Apostles* for men, *that were full of new Wine* : so it was in the Prophet *Jeremiah's* time. *The words of God's Holiness* were esteemed but as the words of a Drunken man, and *the Preachers of God's most Holy words*, were esteemed but as so many Drunken Companions : and that, not only by the Common and Ordinary people ; but also by those very Men, who pretended to be the *Only* Prophets of the Lord, and set up Themselves for the *Only* true Church, Crying up, *The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord*. Where ever there was a *Striſt Liver* and a *Striſt Preacher*, these pretending Prophets and these pretending Church-men, made it all their business to Cry and to Run him down, that God's people might be Prejudiced against him, and receive no benefit by his good Living and good Preaching. And this is the Second thing that struck the good man to the heart and soul. And

The Third is set down in the Words of the Text : *Because of Swearing, Or Cursing, as the Margine has it, the Land mourneth*. A general Corruption of Manners over-flowed the whole Kingdom, because the Priests and the Prophets of the Lord, made so light of his Threatnings and the Words of his Holiness. *For, from the Prophets of Jerusalem Profaneness is gone forth into all the Land ; ver. 15.* Their Licentious Doctrines and Loose Lives, infected and poisoned all the Nation. And particularly, as you have it in the Words immediately before the Text, *The Land is full of Adulterers*. Adultery and Fornication were the reigning and the fashionable Vices of all the Countrey. And as you have it in the last words of that Verse out of which the Text is taken, *Their force is not right.*

right. They did not use their *Force*, nor exercise their Power and Authority in the Defence of what is *Right* and Just, in setting up Good, and putting down Bad, Men. But, *They strengthened the hands of evil doers, that none might return from his wickedness*; ver. 14. *They were not valiant for the Truth upon the earth; but they bent their Tongues, like their Bow, for Lies; and they proceeded from evil to evil*; Jer. 9. 3. And this is the Third and last thing that struck the good man to the heart and soul. And this is the Subject of what I shall, by Gods help, say to you at this time. *Because of Swearing the Land mourneth*. The meaning of which is this.

Swearing does not here signifie all manner of Swearing without Exception. For, this same Prophet do's expressly command us, *To swear in Truth, in Judgment, and in Righteousness*; Jer. 4. 2. And holy *David* assures us, that all who swear after this manner, are so far from being to be *Blamed*, that they are to be *Commended* for it; *Psal.* 63. 12. And every Land shall be so far from *Mourning*, that it shall *Rejoyce and Sing* because of all such Swearing. But, *The Swearing* that is here meant, is, *All False Swearing in Judicial Cases, and all Customary Swearing and Cursing in our Common Talk, whether it be by the true God, or by any false god, or by any created Being whatsoever, though never so good and holy*. Mark it. Though you do not swear by the true God himself; yet if you do it by any false God; or by any humane Person, or by your Faith; Truth, or Conscience; or by Heaven, Earth, or the Mass; or by any other way whatsoever: then, you are guilty of that *Swearing and Cursing*, which, the Text says, *makes the Land to mourn*. Yea, and mark it as long as you live, *You are guilty of a greater Sin, when you swear by your Faith, Truth, Conscience, or the like, which are all created Beings, than when you swear down-right by God*

God himself. For, you all know, that Swearing is a proper Act of Divine Worship, that is only due to God himself. And therefore, they who swear by any thing, but *onely God*, do make that thing they swear by, to be an Idol, and they worship it instead of God. And therefore, they are not only guilty of *Vain Swearing*; but, they are also guilty of *Idolatry*. And therefore this very Prophet speaks of this Sin, as if it were in a manner altogether unpardonable. For, thus He brings in God speaking to Israel concerning this Sin. *How shall I pardon thee for this? Thy Children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods.* Jerem. 5. 7. As if he had said, They are not content to swear by *Me alone*; but, they provoke Me the more, in swearing by *them that are no gods*. For, when they *Foolishly* swear by *Me alone*, they Abuse Me *very much*; but then, they suffer Me to be *God still*, and they do not *wholly* cast Me off: but, when they *Foolishly* swear by *Them that are no gods*; they Abuse Me *much more*; for then, they do not suffer Me to be *God at all*; but, they *Wholly* cast Me off, and set up *Another* in My Stead. And now, *Oh how can I possibly pardon them for this?* As a kind and a loving Husband can easily pardon many little faults in his Wife, while she is True and Faithful to Him, and is content with Him alone; but, when she once proves False to Him, and casts Him off, and takes *Another* in his stead, *How, Oh how can he possibly pardon her for that?* And thus I have shewn you, what is meant by *Swearing* in the Text. And I will now shew you, what is meant by the *Land*. Because of *Swearing the Land mourneth*.

The Land do's not here signify the Inhabitants or the People of the Land: But, it signifies the very *Land it self*, the Earth, or the Ground, which we tread and walk upon with our feet. For, if the Inhabitants and People

of the Land had Mourned for, and Repented of, their Swearing and Cursing; then, the Prophet would not have *Mourned*; but, He would have *Rejoyced* for that: and then, there would have been no need for the Land it self to have Mourned at all. For, the Land it self has no sin of its own to Mourn for, neither is it capable of committing any Sin. And therefore, when God *Cursed the Land, and made it to bring forth Thorns and Thistles*, it was not for any sin of its Own, but onely for *Adam's Sin*; Gen. 3. 17, 18. And the Prophet tells us, *Isa. 24. 3.* with the following Verses: *The Earth mourneth and fadeth away, the world mourneth and fadeth away, the Land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled. For, it is defiled under the Inhabitants thereof, because they have transgressed the Laws, changed the Ordinance, and broken the Everlasting Covenant. And therefore the Curse hath devoured the earth. And for this Cause, holy David assures us, that when a Fruitful Land, mourneth, fadeth away, or is made barren; it is not for any fault in the Land it self; but, it is for the wickedness of them that dwell therein; Psal. 107. 34.* And St. Paul puts this beyond all doubt. For says he, *Rom. 8. 20. The Creature was made subject to Vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. That is, the Earth and the Dumb Creatures that are in it, were not Willingly, and Naturally, and of themselves, made subject to Vanity, and barrenness, and unfruitfulness; but, God laid that Curse upon them for the sin of Man. But, God has not so laid that Curse upon them, but there is Hope that they shall be Delivered from it, and Restored to that admirable State they were in at their first Creation, though at present they are forced to struggle with, and to labour hard, for their Deliverance from it. For, says St. Paul, ver. 21, 22. The creature it self also shall be delivered from the*

the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For, we know, that the whole Creation groaneth, and travaileth in pain together until now; and so on, till the happy time of its glorious Deliverance be fully come. And thus I have shewn you, what is meant by *The Land* in the Text. And I will now shew you, what is meant by *Mourning*. Because of *Swearing* the Land *Mourneth*.

Mourning does not here signifie Weeping, and Crying, and Shedding of Tears, which Men and Women do when they *Mourn*. For, the Land is not capable of doing any such thing. But, as when Men are in a very great and deep *Mourning*, the usual Effects of it are such as these; their Faces are Pale and Wane, their Eyes are Hot and Red, their Skin is Wrinkled and Withered, their Hairs turn Gray, their Spirits are Drunk up, and their Moisture is like the Drought in Summer: So, whenever these and the like Effects are to be seen in the Land, it may be truly said to *Mourn*. And therefore, when the Land is Dried up for want of Rain, the Herbs are Withered, the Grass is Turned, the Clods are Parched, the Fruits are Spoiled, and the whole Surface of the Earth is Chapt and Cloven asunder, and do's, as it were open its Mouth, and Gape, and Pray for Refreshing Showers, and the Sweet Influence of Heaven: Then it is, that the Land is said to *Mourn*. And therefore, *The Mourning of the Land*, is nothing else in plain English; but, *The Pleasant places of the Wilderness are dried up*, as it is Expounded both in the next Words after the Text, and also in *Jerem. 12. 4.* where the Prophet says unto the Lord, *How long shall the Land Mourn, and the herbs of every field wither, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein?* Where you see, that the *Mourning of the Land* is Expounded by the withering of the herbs of every field. And thus I have given you the true meaning of every word in the Text by its self alone.

lone. And the meaning of them all put together is this. *False Swearing in Judicial Cases, and Customary Swearing and Cursing in our common Talk, are so great Sins, that they, above all other Sins whatsoever, provoke God to make the most Fruitful Land to become Unfruitful, and to Punish the People that dwell therein. For, because of Swearing the Land Mourneth.* And the Doctrines contained in this Text thus Expounded are these.

First of all. False Swearing in Judicial Cases, and Customary Swearing and Cursing in our common Talk, are so great Sins, that they provoke God to make the most Fruitful Land to become Unfruitful, and to punish the People that dwell therein. For, because of Swearing the Land Mourneth. And if you do not think this Doctrine sufficiently proved by the Testimony of One Inspired Witness, I will give you Another for the Further Proof of it. For says the Prophet Hosea 4. 2, 3. *By Swearing, Or, because of Swearing; therefore shall the Land Mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall Languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven: Yea, the fishes of the Sea also shall be taken away.* And if you are not yet content with the United Testimonies of these Two Inspired Witnesses: Then behold, here is a Third for you; that at the Mouth of Three such Unquestionable and Infallible Witnesses, it may be fully Proved, and Established beyond all doubt or dispute. For says the Prophet, speaking of *The flying Roll*, that is, *The Curse that goeth over the face of the whole earth*: Zechar. 5. 4. *I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of Hosts, and it shall enter into the house of Him that Swareth falsely by my Name, and it shall Remain in the midst of his House, and shall consume it with the Timber thereof, and the Stones thereof. The Timber and the Stones of all the Houses shall be Consumed because of your Swearing and Cursing. Look ye to it,*

And

And least the False Swearer should think with himself, that he will be so *Close* and so *Secret* in his Swearing and Cursing, that no Man upon Earth shall find him out: Or if any one do's by chance find him out; he can easily *Bribe* him, and *Buy* off his Evidence: Therefore God himself promiseth to come in, and to be a Witness against him. For, says the Lord, Malach. 3. 5. *I will come near you to Judgment, and I will be a Witness against false Swearers.* As if he had said, Though false Swearers are never so *Close* and *Secret*, and though Men are never so *unwilling* to witness against them; yet, there shall be Witnesses enough against them. For, if no body else will do it, I my self will do it, and that *Effectually*.

And least the False Swearer should think with himself, *It will be a long while before God will Witness against me, that will not be till the Day of Judgment at soonest: and therefore, I may, in the mean time, safely go on in my Swearing and Cursing without any Danger at all.* Therefore, Thus saith the Lord unto him in that very same place, Malach. 3. 5. *I will come near you to Judgment, and I will be a Swift Witness against the false Swearers.* As if He had said, It is not so *Long* as you Imagine, before I will come and be a Witness against you: For, though I will not be a Witness against some other Sinners till the Day of Judgment; yet, I will be a *Swift* Witness against you. I will come upon you *Swiftly*, speedily, hastily, suddenly, in an Instant: yea, I will come upon you, *in that very moment, that you desire, and dare, and provoke, and challenge Me to Damn you, if I can;* and I will take you at your word, and let you See, and Feel that I can do it, by sending you down into Hell immediately. For, *while Goliath defied the God of Israel, and Cursed, and Swore at holy David*

by his gods : The words were scarce out of his mouth, but the Swift Wrath of God came upon him *Presently*, and *smote him in the Forehead with a Stone* flung out of *David's Sling*, that he immediately fell down dead upon his face to the earth : 1 Sam. 17. 43, 45, 49. And if God do's not immediately take Vengeance upon all hardened and impenitent Swearers and Curfers, and punish them with *Present Death*, in the very *Act* of their Swearing and Cursing; it is onely because He takes the more time, that He may lift up his Hand the *Higher*, and fetch the *Greater and Heavier Stroke*, to strike them *the further and further, and deeper and deeper*, into the bottomless Pit, and the Gulf impassable. And that is the First Doctrine.

The Second is this. False Swearing in Judicial Cases, and Customary Swearing and Cursing in our common Talk, do not onely provoke God to make the most Fruitful Land to become unfruitful, and to punish the People that dwell therein: but, They, Above all other Sins whatsoever, provoke Him to do so. Swearing and Cursing, Above all other Sins whatsoever, provoke the Lord to make a Land to Mourn, and to Smart and to feel His Rod. Swearing and Cursing, Above all other Sins whatsoever, provoke the Lord to destroy a Land with an utter Destruction. For, though the words immediately before the Text assure us, that the Land was then full of Adulterers: And though the words immediately after the Text assure us, that their Course was evil, and their Force was not right: And though all the words in that whole Chapter, both before and after the Text assure us, that there were scarce any Sins that could be Nam'd or Thought of, but what they were then More or Less, if not Notoriously, guilty of: yet, for all this, it is not said, That the Land mourned because of those Sins; though the

the very *Least* of them *Alone*, was enough to make the whole World to mourn and lament all together: but, it is *Emphatically*, it is *more Especially*; yea, and it is *Onely* said, *Because of Swearing the Land mourneth*. Not, that those other Sins did not provoke God at all: for, I have told you, the very *Least* of them provok'd him enough to destroy all Mankind: but onely, that They did not provoke Him *so much*, as Swearing and Cursing did; and therefore, They, *Above all other Sins whatsoever*, provoke God to make the most Fruitful Land to become Unfruitful, and to punish the People that dwell therein. And therefore, when the Lord says in the Third Commandment, *Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain*: He adds to it these words, which He do's not to any of all the Rest, *The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain*. Intimating, that God will take a more particular Care to punish the Swearer and Curser, *Above all other Sinners whatsoever*: Of all Sinners, the Swearer and the Curser shall never be taken for *Guiltless* persons: but whosoever shall escape punishment, *They shall never go Unpunished*. Their punishment is *as Sure and as Certain*, as if they *Now* had it; as if they were *Now*, in *this very moment*, actually suffering it in Hell Fire. And of this we have very Signal and Remarkable Examples in Holy Scripture. For, *there was a Famine in the days of David King of Israel, Three years together*. And David inquired of the Lord, *what was the cause of it*. And the Lord answered him that it was for Saul and his bloody house, because he had broken the Oath of the Lord, which Joshua had made to the Gibeonites, about Three hundred Years before; 2 Sam. 21. 1. Now you all know, that Sin was grown to such a great Head in the days of David, that He complains, *There was not One godly man left; and that there was*

None that did good; no, not One: Psal. 12. 1. compared with Psal. 14. 2. And therefore, though He was a King: Yet, He could not get any of his Subjects to help Him, to punish Sinners, and to reform the Bad manners of His Kingdom: But, He was forced to break forth into these Pathetical Words: Psal. 94. 16. *Who will rise up with Me against the evil doers? Or who will stand up for Me against the workers of Iniquity?* And yet, though Sin was grown so Strong and Powerful at that time: God did not send that Three years Famine upon the Land, for any Sin whatsoever, but onely because King Saul had broke the Oath of the Lord made to a few poor Slaves, who were his Bondmen and Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water; Josh. 9. 23. Mark it for Christ his sake. These poor Slaves had got this Oath from *Joshuah* at the first, by Craft and Subtlety, and indeed, by down-right Lying and Cheating; Josh. 9. 3. with the following Verses. Yea, and they had got it from Him, about Three hundred years before. Yea, and King Saul who had broke it with them, had been Dead for some time: And yet, notwithstanding all this, notwithstanding this Oath had been so ill gotten at the first; and had been so well kept for so long a time; and the Man, who broke it, was both dead and gone: Yet, notwithstanding all this, The Breach of this Oath made all Israel to have a Famine for Three years together, and made seven of King Saul's Sons to be delivered unto the Gibeonites, who hanged them up unto the Lord in Gibeah of Saul: That is, they hanged them up in their Fathers own City; and perhaps before their Own, or their Relations, Doors, for the Greater Terror: 2 Sam. 21. 6. And therefore, let all Swearers and Cursers, Remember this as long as they live. Remember, That though God do's not immediately strike you Dead upon the place, for your False
and

and Customary Swearing and Cursing: Yet, it may cost this whole Kingdom a *Three years Famine*, *three hundred years hence*: and it may cost your childrens children their *Lives*; it may make them all to be Hanged up on Gallows and Gibbets unto the Lord for your sake. And this I suppose you all grant, is a very Terrible Instance of Gods Severity against *Swearing and Cursing*. And yet, I shall just Now give you Another, that is much more Terrible than it. For, the Land of *Canaan*, you all know, was Fruitful ev'n to a Miracle, and was therefore called, *A Land that floweth with Milk and Honey, which is the Glory of all Lands*; Ezek. 20. 6. But, that Land at present, as they who have been there tell us, do's by no means deserve this great Character, because it is rather *Barren and Unfruitful*, then otherwise. And as that Land it self is thus strangely alter'd for the worse: So the *Jews*, who were the people of it, are as strangely alter'd to the fall. For though they were heretofore set on high above all the Nations of the earth; and though they were the Head and not the Tail, and onely Above and not Beneath; though they were the People of God, the Favourites of Heaven, and the most Flourishing Church and State in the whole World: yet, they are Now, and have been for almost Seventeen hundred years, the most despicable people under the Sun, removed into all the Kingdoms of the Earth for their burt; a Reproach, a Proverb, a Taunt, and a Curse in all places whither they are driven: Jerem. 24. 9. And now let us seriously consider, which of all their Sins has brought this Extraordinary Curse upon Them and their Land? Which of all their Sins has made their Land to be thus Barren and Unfruitful; and has made Them to be thus Despised and Rejected of all Mankind? Why verily, none of all their Sins has brought all this upon

upon Them and their Land ; but onely their Swearing and Cursing: *Their Swearing and Cursing has brought all this upon them and Their Land.* For, when Pontius Pilate, the Deputy of Tiberius Caesar in Judea, had made some few ineffectual attempts to deliver our Saviour *Jesus Christ* from the Malice and Fury of the Jews, he presently saw that he could prevail nothing with Them, but that rather a Tumult was made; and therefore, he took water, and washed his hands before Them, saying *I am innocent of the blood of this Just Person: see ye to it.* And then, they All answered, and said, **HIS BLOOD BE ON US AND ON OUR CHILDREN: Matth. 27. 24, 25.** And this, this is that DREADFUL CURSE, which is the true and the Onely Cause of all the Misery, which they have already suffer'd for so long a time, and which they must also suffer hereafter, none knows, *How long*, but God alone. And therefore, let all Swearers and Cursers Remember this as long as they live. Remember, that though God do's not immediately Strike you Dead upon the place, for your *False and Customary Swearing and Cursing*; yet, it may make All this Land to become barren and unfruitful; it may make All this Kingdom to be carried into Captivity; it may make all your Children to be Vagabonds and Fugitives, to be Scorned and Hissed at among all people; it may make All our Church and State to be broken and shatter'd to pieces, and over-run with Popery, Tyranny, Slavery, and Arbitrary Government; yea, and it may make All this Evil, and All this Misery, to continue, and abide, and lie hard upon us, for Seventeen hundred years together, and No man knows how much longer. *And will you still go on to Swear and to Curse? Have you no regard for the Barrenness of your Land? Have you no Respect for the*
Cap.

Captivity of your Country? Have you no Detestation of Popery, Idolatry, Slavery, and Tyranny? Have you no Concern for the Welfare of your Church and State? Have you no Care for the Honour of God's Holy Name? Have you no Thoughts of Heaven or Hell, God or the Devil? And have you no Pity nor Compassion for your selves, your Wives, and Children, which you thus foolishly Expose both to Temporal and Eternal Ruin, both of Body and Soul, for the sake of your False and Customary Swearing and Cursing? Ob what unaccountable Pleasure can there be in these Sins, that you thus prefer them before Heaven, and Happiness, and Eternal Life? Ob what strange Bewitchery can there be in these Sins, that can make you Amends for the Unspeakable and Unconceivable Misery they Entail upon you and yours to all Eternity? Ob! if all these powerful Motives put together, cannot make you to leave off your Swearing and Cursing, it is much, it is very much to be Feared, that Nothing else can, till you are burning in unquenchable flames, where you will be able to do nothing, but onely to beg and to cry Ineffectually, for the least Drop of Water, to cool the Tips of your inflamed Tongues, which are set on fire of Hell. And that is the Second Doctrine.

The Third is this. Every Christian is bound to grieve, and to mourn, and to do all he can, for the Reclaiming of these Common, Crying, and National Sins of Swearing and Cursing. For, says the Prophet, Mine heart within me is broken, and all my bones shake: I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom Wine hath overcome. For, Because of Swearing the Land mourneth. And has not every Christian the same Reason, that the Prophet Jeremiah had, to be Concerned for the Profanation of God's holy Name? Has not the same God that made Him, made Thee; and that pre-
served

served Him , preserved Thee ; And that redeemed Him , redeemed Thee ? And was He *so much* Concerned for the Dishonour done to God by Swearing and Cursing ? And art Thou *so little* , *if at all* , Concerned for it ? Did God require *More* of Him , than He do's of Thee ? Or do'st Thou expect to go to Heaven an *Easier* way than He did ? Hast not Thou the same tender bowels of Pity and Compassion that He had ? And hast Thou no Pity and Compassion for that Silly, Unthinking Sinner , *that desires God to Damn him , and the Devil to take him ?* Canst thou hear such words as these , without horror and amazement , without quaking all over ? Do's not thy Belly tremble , and thy Lips quiver , and thy Hairs stand on end , and thine Ears tinkle , and Rivers of Water run down thine Eys , when Swearing and Cursing are uttered forth with such a Loud Voice , as if they would out-do the horrible Sound , and the Ratling , and Dismal Cracks of mighty Thundring ? Do'st thou not think that Heaven and Earth , and the whole Frame of Nature are groaning , and sighing , and just Dissolving , and giving up the last Gasps ? And canst thou be unconcerned at all this ? Hast thou no Sense nor Feeling ? Art thou all Stone , and Iron , and Brass ? Certainly the great Concern which the Prophet *Jeremiab* had upon Him , for the Swearing and Cursing of His time , do's sufficiently teach Thee thy Duty , and it calls upon Thee , to grieve , and to mourn , and to do all thou canst , for the Reclaiming of these Common , Crying , and National Sins of *Swearing and Cursing* , which , at this time , in this City , and in this very *Parish* , do so much Abound , that they provoke God to pour forth all the Vials of his Wrath upon us , and to Consume us all at once , in an Instant. Oh turn to *Levit. 24. 13.* with the following Verses ; and see and tremble at what is there written

ten : *The Lord spake unto Moses , saying , bring forth Him that hath Cursed , without the Camp , and let All that Heard Him , lay their hands upon his Head , and let all the Congregation stone him . And thou shalt speak unto the Children of Israel , saying , Whosoever Curseth his God , shall bear his Sin : And he that Blasphemeth the Name of the Lord , he shall surely be put to death , and all the Congregation shall Certainly stone him , As well the stranger , as he that is born in the Land ; when he Blasphemeth the Name of the Lord , shall be put to death . Mark it . ALL THAT HEAR ANY MAN CURSE OR BLASPHEME GOD , are here commanded to lay their hands upon the Head of that Curser or Blasphemer , that so , they may Witness against him , and free themselves from his Sin , by charging it upon his own head , and stoning him to death for it . And do you do thus ?* *Mistake me not . I do not ask you , whether you stone him to death or no ? For , the Punishment is not so great Now , as it was Then , though I wish with all my heart and soul , that it were . For is it not a shame that a poor man shall be Hanged for Robbing his neighbour of a Horse , a Cow , or the like : and yet , that a Rich Sinner , who Robs God of the honour due to his holy Name , shall onely forfeit two or three Shillings ? But , all that I ask you , is onely this ; Are you thus ready to bear witness against every one , that Sweareth and Curseth in your hearing ? Yea , have not I my self seen twenty or thirty people together in this Parish , who have refused to tell the Name of a Swearer and Curser , though they have been Desired and Adjured to do so in God's Name , and for Christ his sake ? Do not all those people know , that they then preferred that Swearer before God , and that they then took part with that Curser against Christ ? And*

do's not *Christ* himself tell them, what he will do with them at the Day of Judgment; For, says He, *Mark 8. 38. Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful Generation, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He cometh in the Glory of His Father, with His holy Angels.* Assure your Souls, if you are ashamed of *Christ* in this world, He will be ashamed of you in the other world. If you have no Care of His Name and His Honour here, He will have no Care of your Salvation hereafter. And if you refuse to bear Witness for Him Now, He will certainly bear Witness against you at the hour of Death and the Day of Judgment. Pray turn to the *1 Kings 21. 9.* with the following Verses; and there you will find, that, at the Command of *Jezebel*, two Sons of *Belial* bear witness that *Naboth* had *Blasphemed* or *Cursed* God and the King. And therefore, the Magistrates proclaim a Fast, that His Sin may not be charged by God upon them, and they stone Him to death for it. Where you see, that it was no hard matter for *Jezebel*, to get two False witnesses to Swear, that *Naboth* had *Blasphemed* or *Cursed* God and the King, when he had not done so: And shall it be such a hard thing for us, to get One True witness to make *Affidavit* against those, who Swear and Curse in his own hearing? Those Magistrates proclaimed a Fast, and put *Naboth* to death for that *Blasphemy* and *Cursing*, which they knew he was not guilty of, though it was *Legally* proved against Him: And will our Magistrates neither Fast, nor Pray, nor Grieve, nor Mourn for, nor scarce Punish, a Swearer, a Curser, or any other Sinner, when they are duly and legally called upon to do it? For, have not I my self offered to make *Affidavit* against One, who Mowed upon the Lords Day, in my own Sight, and refused to leave off, notwithstanding

withstanding all I could say to him? And have not I my self offered to make *Affidavits* against two others, that have Sworn, Cursed, and been Drunk? And have not some Justices of Peace who are **DOCTORS OF DIVINITY**, refused to take my *Affidavit*, in all these Cases? And shall I still hold my Peace? If I should, *These Stones would immediately cry out*: Luk. 19. 40. *Help, Lord, help, for there is not One godly man left; for the Faithful are minished from among the children of men*; Psal. 12. 1. Certainly, their *Hypocrisy* in the Case of *Naboth*, will rise up in Judgment against us, and condemn us at the Last Day: because we are not so *Valiant* for the *Truth*, as they were for a *Lie*; we are not so *Concerned* for *Real Swearing* and *Cursing*, as they were for *Pretended Blasphemy*; and we are not so *Dutiful to God*, as they were to *Jezebel*, that *Cursed Woman*. And that is the *Third Doctrine*. And the Use of all the *Three Doctrines* is this:

First of all, If False Swearing in Judicial Cases, and Customary Swearing and Cursing in our common Talk, be so great Sins, that they provoke God to make the most fruitful Land to become unfruitful, and to punish the people that dwell therein: Then instead of Complaining and Murmuring, because of the Dearness of Corn at this time, Repent of, and Reform this your Swearing and Cursing, which provoke God to bring a Famine upon the Land, and to make all things much Dearer than they are at present. Every time thou Swarest and Cursest, or refusest to bear Witness against those that do so, thou Enhancest the Market, thou makest Corn the Dearer, and thou provokest God to Starve thee with Hunger and Thirst. For, may not God justly deny thee Meat and Drink, to put in thy
D 2 Mouth,

Mouth, when thou do'st nothing with thy Mouth, but Swear and Curse against Him? Yea, though thou do'st not Swear and Curse thy self; yet thou art liable to be cut off from thy people, for refusing to be a Witness against them that do so. For says the Lord, *Levit. 5. 1. If a Soul hear the voice of Swearing, and is a Witness, whether he hath seen or known of it; if he do not utter it; then he shall bear his iniquity.* That is, he shall be put to death, Or, cut off from his people. If thou art a Justice of Peace, a Church-warden, a Constable, or any other Officer, in Church or State, then every time thou refuseth to Present or Punish Swearers, Cursers, or any other Sinners that thou art bound by Oath to Present and Punish, thou Enbansest the Market, thou makest Corn the Dearer, and thou provokest God to make our Land to become barren and unfruitful. If thou shouldst see a Company of Engrossers buying up all the Corn in every Market, to send it beyond Sea, or onely to keep it in their own Houses, that it may become the Dearer; wouldest thou not be ready to break their Carts, to pull down their Barns and Store-houses, and to take it all away from them by Force, though thou canst not Justifie it by Law. And why then, when thou hast the Law for thee, art not thou as severe against Swearers and Cursers, who Enbanse the Market much more than those Engrossers do? Yea, and who cause God to send Them to be a Punishment and a Plague to thee, for Swearing and Cursing Thy self, and for neglecting to punish it in others? And therefore, never complain, that too hot or too cold weather, too much Rain or too much Drought, make the Land to be unfruitful, and the Corn to be Dear. No, no, It is too much Swearing, and too much Cursing, that is the cause of all this. For because of Swearing the Land mourneth. And therefore, instead of Swearing and Cursing, Let the people Praise

Praise thee, O God; yea, let All the people Praise thee. And mark what follows: Then shall the earth bring forth her Increase, and God, even our own God, shall give us his Blessing: Psal. 67. 5, 6.

Secondly. If False Swearing in Judicial Cases, and Customary Swearing and Cursing in our common Talk, be so great Sins, that they, ABOVE ALL OTHER SINS WHATSOEVER, provoke God to make the most Fruitful Land to become Unfruitful, and to punish the people that dwell therein: then, I believe, you would willingly know, what there is in Swearing and Cursing, which, above all other Sins whatsoever, do's thus strangely provoke God's Anger against us? To which I answer, I do not know of any Sin, but what has something in it to Tempt a man to commit it, except it be Swearing and Cursing. For, all Sins are comprehended under the Lust of the Flesh, which is Pleasure; The Lust of the Eye, which is Profit; and the Pride of Life, which is Preferment; 1 John 2. 16. And Pleasure, Profit, and Preferment, are very Strong Temptations to make a man Sin. But, Swearing and Cursing has no Temptation at all in it. And therefore, it provokes God's Anger, Above all other Sins whatsoever. For, it makes a Man sin for sinning's sake; it makes a Man sin when he gets nothing by it; yea, and it makes a Man a Devil, who sins against God out of meer Spite and Malice. Nor is this all it do's neither. For, though every Sinner do's indeed, by his Sin, provoke God's Anger: yet, no Sinner whatsoever, except the Swearer and Curser, do's, by his Mouth, as well as his Sin, Pray, and Beg, and ev'n Dare God to Damn him, and the Devil to take him. And if God were not more Severe against these than any other Sinners, it would make all

all men apt to believe, that there is no God at all.

But, Perhaps, thou wilt say, that thou art *Provoked* to Swear and to Curse. Well, Suppose a Man should *Provoke* thee, to give a Hundred or a Thousand Pounds to the Poor; Do'st thou presently do it, because thou art *Provoked* to it? Suppose a Man should *Provoke* thee to Drown, Burn, or Hang thy self; do'st thou presently do it, because thou art *Provoked* to it? And why then wilt thou Damn thy self by Swearing and Cursing, because thou art *Provoked* to it? But, who is it that Provokes thee to it? Is it thy Friend or thy Foe, God or the Devil? If thy *Foe* provokes thee, wilt thou presently fly in thy *Friends* face, and *Stab* him for it, and let thy *Foe* alone? Or if the *Devil* provokes thee, wilt thou presently fly in *God's* face, and *Curse* Him for it, and let the *Devil* alone?

But, perhaps, thou wilt say, *thou meanest no harm* by thy Swearing and Cursing; but, *it is a Custom thou hast gotten, and thou canst not well leave it off.* Well, Suppose thou pluckest out thy Friends right Eye, or cuttest off his right Hand; wilt thou excuse it by saying, *That thou meanest no harm by it?* Is not this exactly the Answer of that *Mad man* that *Solomon* speaks of *Prov. 26. 18, 19. Who casteth fire-brands, arrows, and death, and saith, Am I not in sport?* Must not thou needs be a Desperate and a Devillish Sinner, who canst thus *make a mock of Sin and a sport and a jest of Hell and Damnation?* And do'st thou think, that this will in the least Excuse thy Swearing and Cursing? Suppose an *Adulterer* should say, *he means no harm* by his *Adultery* with his Neighbours Wife; but, it is a Custom which he has gotten, and he cannot leave it off. Or, Suppose a *Tradesman* should say, *he means no harm,*
by

by his *Lying and Cheating* in his way of Trade; but, it is a Custom which he has gotten, and he cannot leave it off: Or, Suppose a *Thief* should say, *he means no harm*, by his *Theft*; but, it is a Custom which he has gotten, and he cannot leave it off: Do's not this *Aggravate* all their Sins, and make them far the *Worse*? And shall that *Lessen* thy Sin, which makes it the *Greater*? Or shall that *Excuse* thy Sin, which makes it *without all Excuse*, and renders it *wholly Inexcusable*.

Thirdly. If every Christian be bound to grieve, and to mourn, and to do all he can, for the Reclaiming of these Common, Crying, and National Sins of Swearing and Cursing: Then I demand of every one here present,

Did'st thou ever grieve or mourn, or shed one tear, for any Swearing and Cursing, that ever thou did'st hear, either abroad in the Streets, or at home in thine own House? If thou did'st not: Then thou art not like them, *who had a Mark set upon their Foreheads, to preserve them from the Publick Destruction, because they sighed, and cried, for all the Abominations that were done in the midst of Jerusalem; Ezek. 9. 4.* Thou art not like holy Lot, *who viewed his righteous soul, from day to day, in seeing and hearing the Unlawful deeds of the Sodomites; neither canst thou expect such a Signal Deliverance as he had, when all the City was burn'd with fire from Heaven, excepting Himself, his two Daughters, and his Wife, who was soon after turned into a Pillar of Salt. But, Thou art an Enemy to God, because thou do'st not endeavour to put a Stop to the Profanation of his holy Name. Thou art an Enemy to thine own Soul, by making thy self guilty of the Swearers and Cursers Sin.* Thou art an *En-*

my

my to the Soul of the Swearer and Curser, for not attempting to Reform him. Thou art an Enemy both to the Church and State wherein thou livest, by provoking God to bring a Judgment upon them. In short, Thou art an Enemy to God, thy Neighbour, and Thy self. And whose Friend canst thou then be?

Didst thou ever force any Swearer and Curser to go before a Justice of Peace, and make him pay his Forfeit, and give it to the Poor, as the Act of Parliament commandeth thee to do? If thou didst not: Then thou hast added this Sin to all the Rest. Thou hast been guilty of Sacrilege. For, thou hast Robbed the Poor of all that Money, which they should have by thy Information against Swearers and Cursers. And those Poor deserve to be starved, who will not Inform a Justice of Peace against Swearers and Cursers, when they may have so much Money for their pains. For, they love Swearing and Cursing so well, even in other men, that they will sooner starve themselves, than Inform against them.

Didst thou ever take any Delight in the Company of Swearers and Cursers? Didst thou ever send for, and Invite them kindly to come to thy House, to eat and drink, and be Merry with thee? If thou didst, Then, thou art not onely as Bad as they are, but, thou art also far worse than they are. For, to take Pleasure in any Sinners Company, is far worse than to be guilty of his Sin: Rom. 1. 32. And you, who are Vertuous and Chast Women, ought to have a very great care of this. For otherwise, you will all become guilty of Swearing and Cursing, though you have never Sworn nor Cursed in all your life, because you keep Company with, and take Delight in, Swearers and Cursers.

Or

Or hast thou at this time any Swearing and Cursing Servants in thy Family, Boat, Barges, Shop, or Field? If thou hast: Then, thou provokest God to bring a Curse upon all the Money, that thou gettest by their Labour. Thou Provokest God to Consume the Timber and the Stones of all thy Houses that are built by them. For, *As God blessed the Egyptians house for Joseph's sake, who was a good, a chaste, and a holy Servant; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the House and in the Field; Gen. 39. 5. So God may justly curse thy House, and all that thou hast, for the sake of thy Swearing and Cursing Servants.* And here, I profess seriously, that it is a great wonder to me, how thou darrest trust any such man in thy Family. For, dost thou think, that he, who breaks the *Third Commandment*, by Swearing and Cursing against God, though he has neither Profit nor Pleasure by it; will not much more break the *Eighth Commandment*, by Stealing thy Goods: and will not much more break the *Seventh Commandment*, by committing Adultery with thy Wife and Daughter, when he may have both Pleasure and Profit for it?

Fourthly and lastly, If the Land, the Earth, and the Ground we tread upon, mourneth and languisheth, and fadeth away, because of Swearing and Cursing: Then, how do's this Aggravate and Condemn the Swearing and Cursing of all men? For, the Land hath neither Sense nor Reason; and yet it mourneth for the Sins of Men. And Men who have both Sense and Reason, do not so much as mourn for their own Sins. Their Sense and Reason serve them to no other end, but onely to make them more Senseless and more Unreasonable, than the Beasts that Perish, yea, than the very Earth it self, which those Beasts tread upon. And therefore, instead of speaking to you Men; I will Now speak to the more Obedient

Earth, as the Prophets have done before me: O Earth, Earth, Earth, hear ye the word of the Lord; Jerem. 22. 29. Hear, O Earth, behold, I will bring evil upon this people: even the fruit of their thoughts: the fruit of their Swearing and Cursing: because they have not hearkned unto my words, nor to my Law, but rejected it: Jerem. 6. 19. Hear, O Heavens, and give ear, O Earth, for the Lord hath spoken: I have nourished and brought up Children, and they have Rebelled against Me. The Oxe knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Masters Crib: but, Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider: Isa. 1. 2, 3.

Oh consider seriously of what I have said unto you, and the Lord God give you all a right understanding in all things, for Christ his sake.

If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them; otherwise your Knowledge will be your utter Undoing: Which that it may never be, The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. Amen.

F I N I S.



